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No. 8

Luke White
Mrs. Arabia 295 Market St.
Nov 7. 1

BCholera Infantum.

Luke White

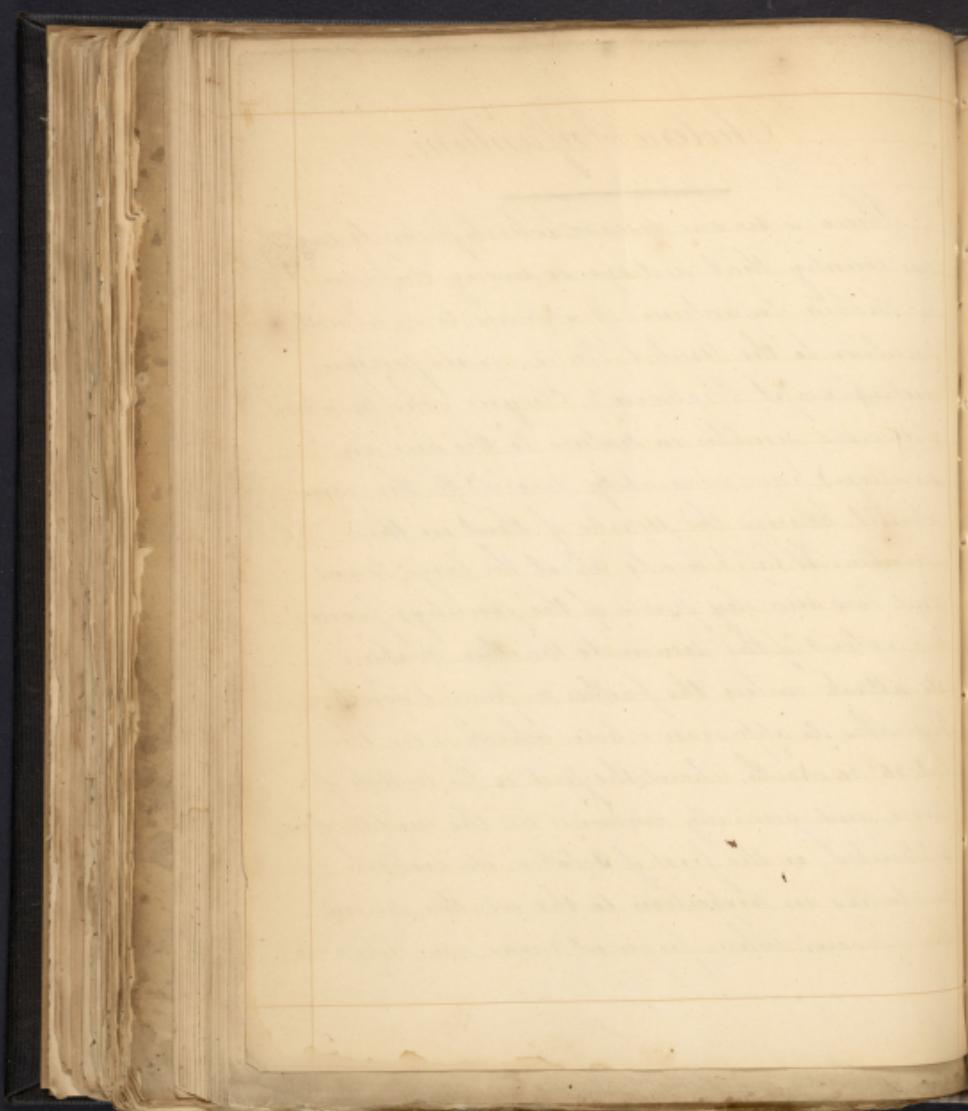
admitted March 10th 1820

W. H. D.

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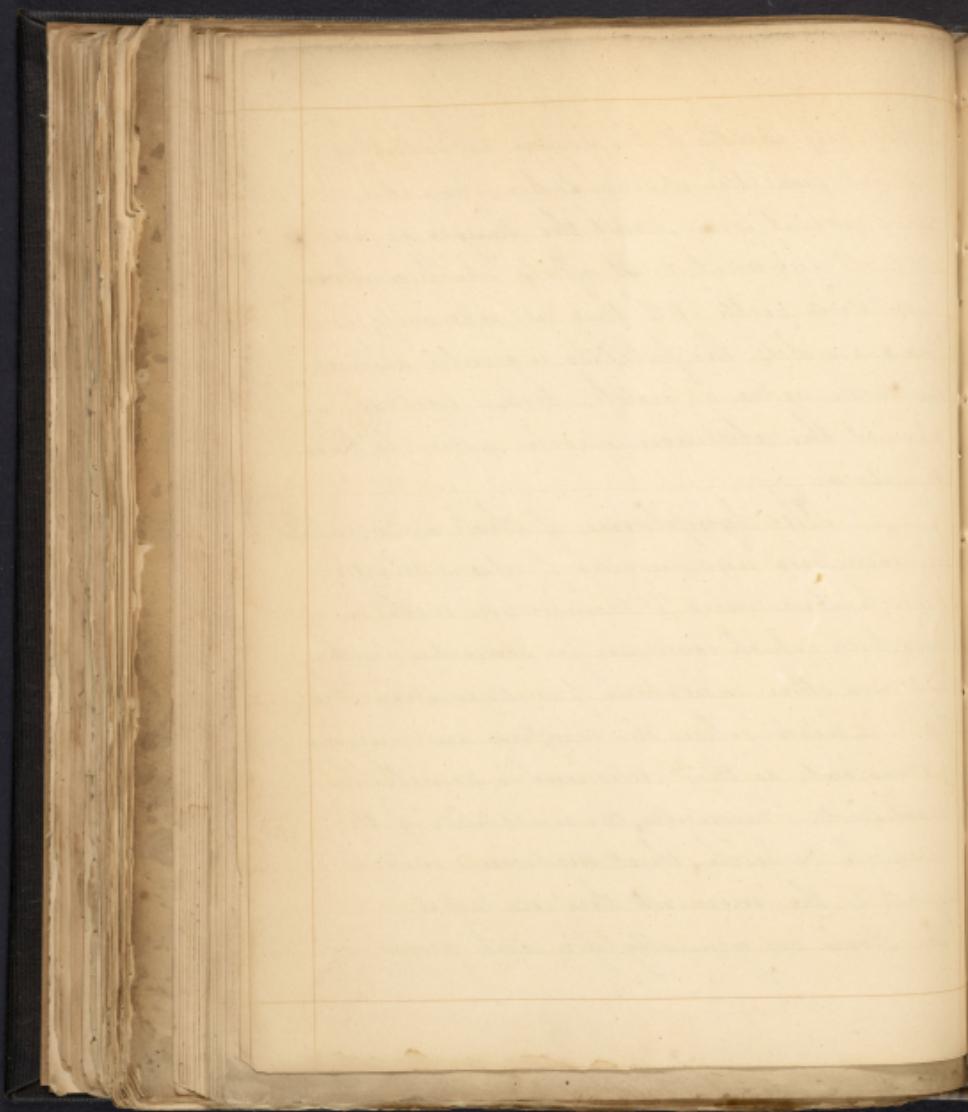
Cholera Infantum.

There is no one disease which prevails in our country that destroys so many children as cholera Infantum. It appears to be almost peculiar to the United States, as no foreign writers (except Coghorn & Cheyne who mention a disease similar in nature to the one in question) have accurately described the complaint, bearing the marks of that in this country. It appears to affect the large towns and low marshy parts of the country, from one extremity of the union to the other, making its attack earlier the farther we proceed south. It makes its appearance here (which is in the Lat. 36° 30' North, about the first, or the middle of June, and generally continues till the middle of September, or the first of October, its violence is always in proportion to the weather during the season, where frequent rains have suffused

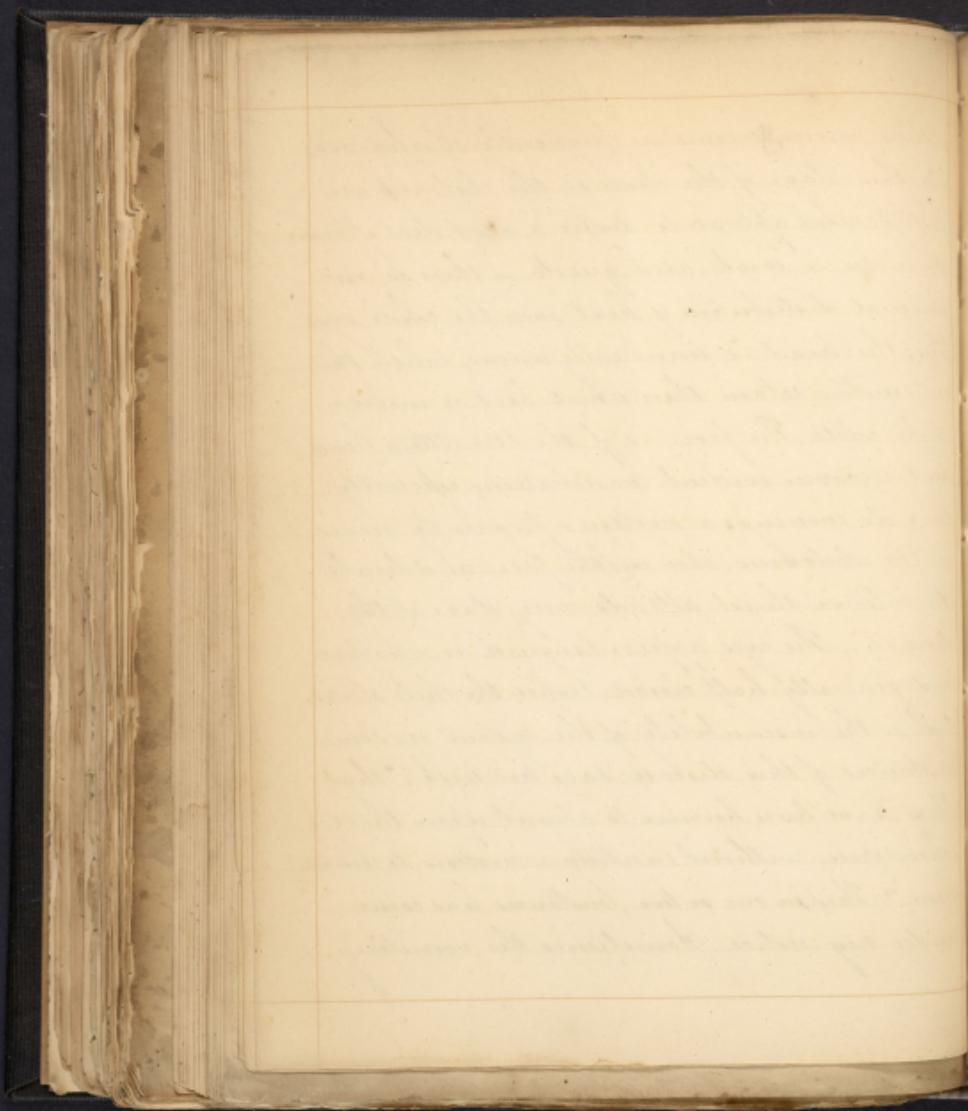


in the early months of the season succeeded by very hot sun, the disease takes upon it a more violent form, and the danger is considerably augmented. It affects children almost from their birth, till they are upwards of two years old. The fatality is greater among the lower order of people, where mothers neglect the attention which is due to their children.

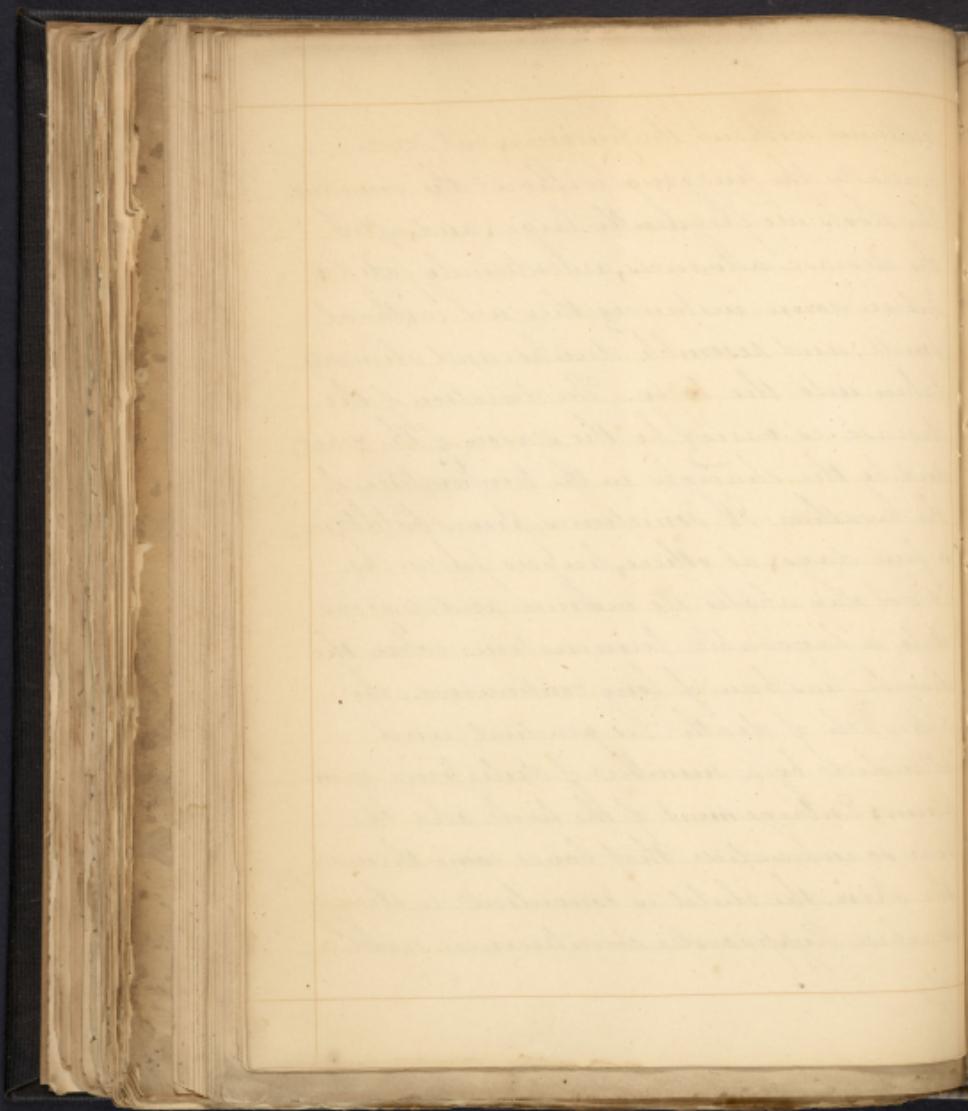
The Symptoms, of Cholera Infantum are vomiting and purging of bilious matter; though sometimes it commences with a diarrhoea which continues for some days without any other symptom of indisposition; the fever is high, when the vomiting and purging are violent, so that delirium is sometimes produced. Frequently, the irritability of the stomach is such, that medicines will be rejected the moment they are taken. The stools are generally of a dark green or



yellow colour, worms are frequently discharged. In this stage of the disease the children are restless, and appear to suffer a good deal of pain: the pulse is weak, and quick: — there is an unequal distribution of heat over the whole system; the head is unusually warm, while the extremities retain their usual heat or incline to be cold. The fever is of the remitting kind and discovers evident exacerbations especially towards evening: a swelling frequently occurs in the abdomen, also in the face, and limbs. An intense thirst attends every stage of the disease. The eyes appear languid, and hollow, and generally half closed (when the child sleeps). Such is the insensibility of the system in some instances of this disease, says Dr Rush, "that flies have been known to alight upon the eyes when open, without exciting a motion to remove them." This in one or two instances has come under my notice. Sometimes the vomiting

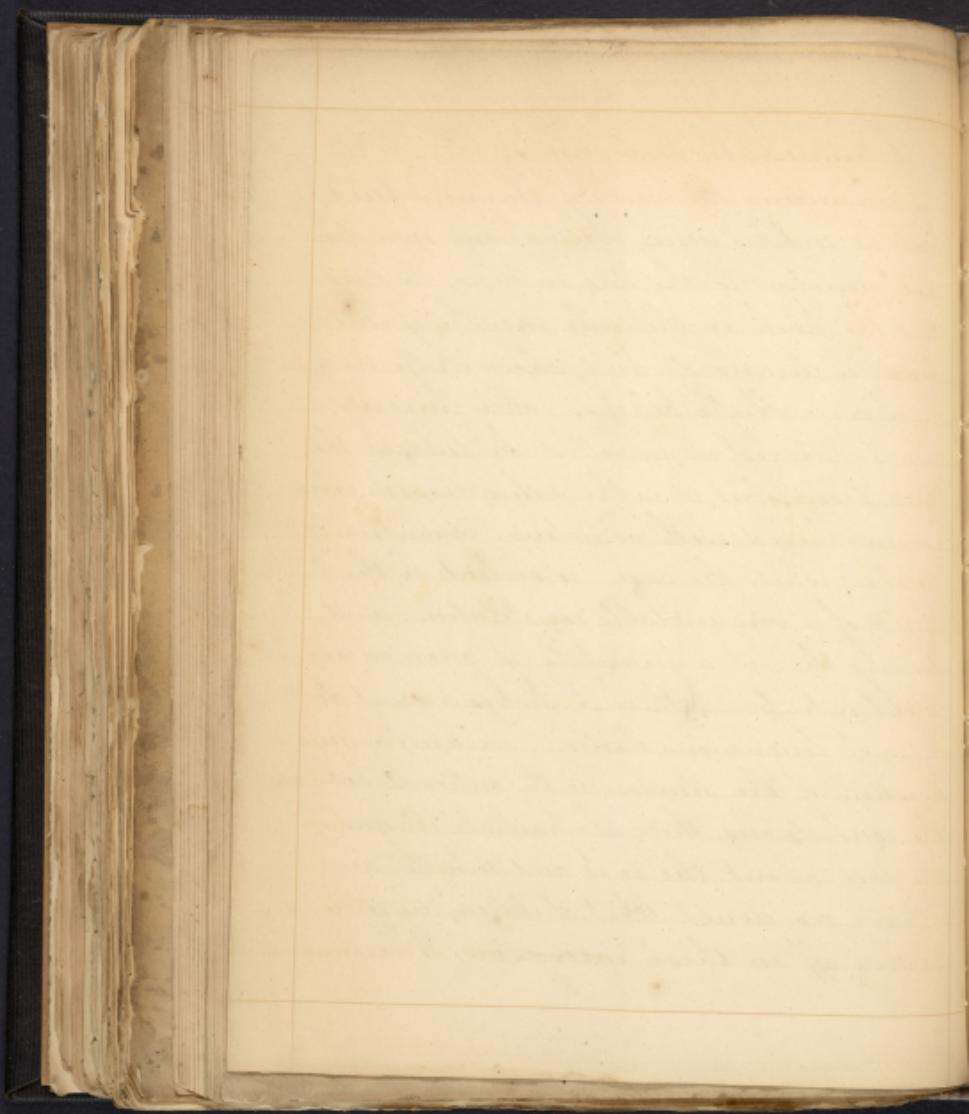


continues without the purging, but more generally the purging without the vomiting. The stools are frequently large; and, after the disease advances, are extremely fetid; but in some instances they are without smell, and resemble drincks, and aliments taken into the body. The duration of the disease is varied by the season of the year, and by the changes in the temperature of the weather. It sometimes proves fatal, in a few days; at others, lingers for weeks. A cool day abates its violence and disposes it to a favorable termination; when the disease has been of long continuance, the approach of death is gradual, and attended by a number of distressing symptoms: Enlargement of the liver, and the body so emaciated that bones come through the skin, the child is convulsed, a strongly marked Hippocratic countenance, and a



fatal termination soon ensues.

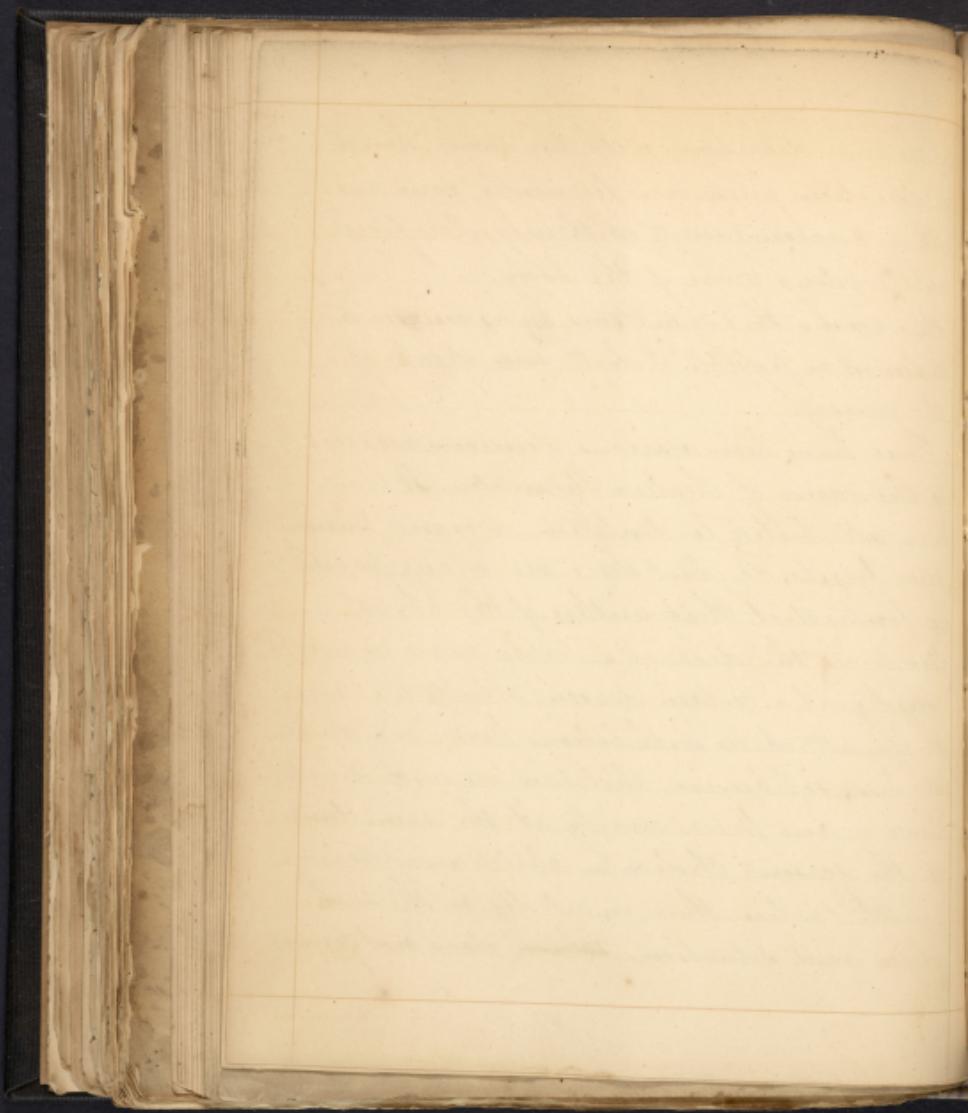
In consulting the works of Cheyne, I find that he makes some observations on a disease similar to the one in view. He says that the liver, in the early months of childhood, is deranged, and shows itself in a discharge chiefly bilious. When purging only appears, it is called by vulgarists, the green Scour; but it is the same disease when accompanied with vomiting. Convulsions appear when the age is violent, or the child of a very irritable constitution; and during the fit a quantity of green excrement is passed, & there is always a great deal of fever, convulsions, starting, screaming, and twisting of the limbs. In the intervals between the convulsions, there are partial spasms of the face, about the eyes and mouth; and I have no doubt that children are often carried off in these paroxysms. It becomes



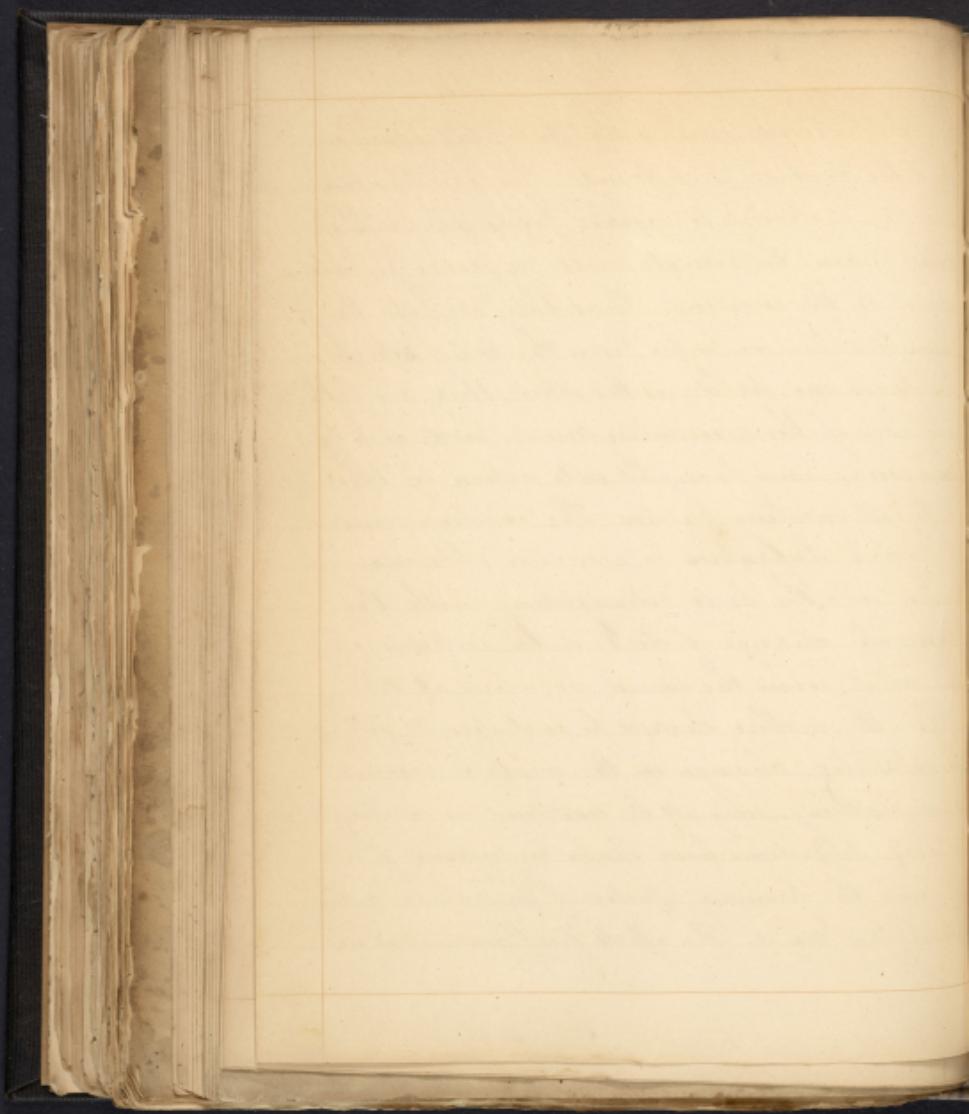
a chronic diarrhoea, with the same kind of deposition, green, and frequently sour and putrid, & accompanied with irregular fevers, and a wasting away of the body.

After giving the symptoms in as concise a manner as possible I shall now speak of the causes.

There have been various opinions relative to the cause of Cholera Infantum: It has been attributed to detrition, worms, summer fruits, &c. but there are many proofs to contradict that neither of the above produces the disease: — Every year in our country, at a certain season, adults are more or less, attacked with bilious fevers, and cholera Morbus; so likewise, children are visited with Cholera, and fevers, nearly at the same time in the season. Cholera in children appears a little earlier than in adults in the same place and situations, ~~which~~ does not prove

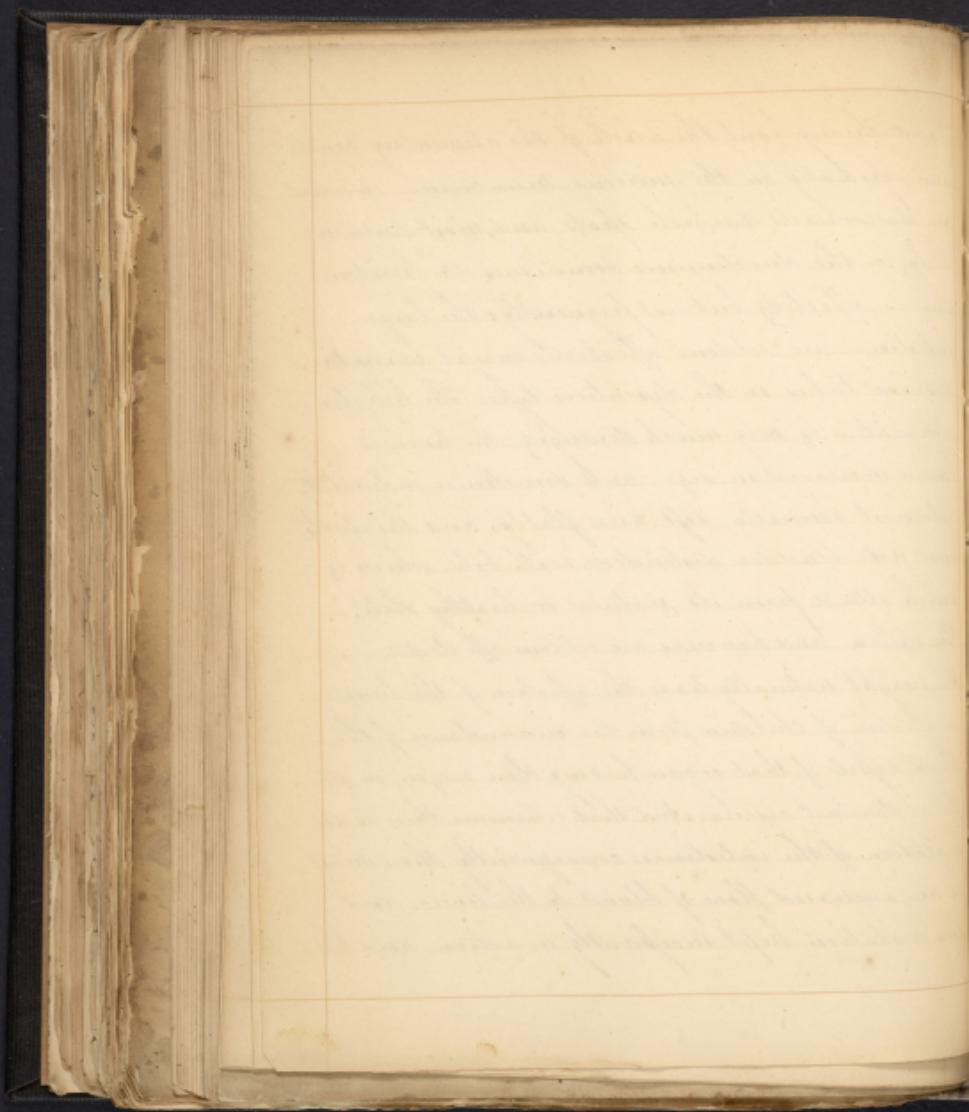


the predisposing causes not to be the same, or that the disease is different. — For children being more predisposed to disease from weakness of constitution, the remote cause is sooner put into action by the exciting. That they are both the same disease we infer from the cause which produces one, produces the other: They are both diseases of the alimentary canal, produced by miasma, and brought into action by their different exciting causes. The exciting cause of Cholera Infantum is generally substances taken into the body, disagreeing with the Stomach, change of diet, such as removing the child from the breast, or while at the breast the mother should be indisposed, or has menstruated, change in the weather, worms, and clothing, may all be considered as exciting causes. Dissections have shown the propriety of establishing the primary affection of the disease in the alimentary canal. The effects of inflammation are



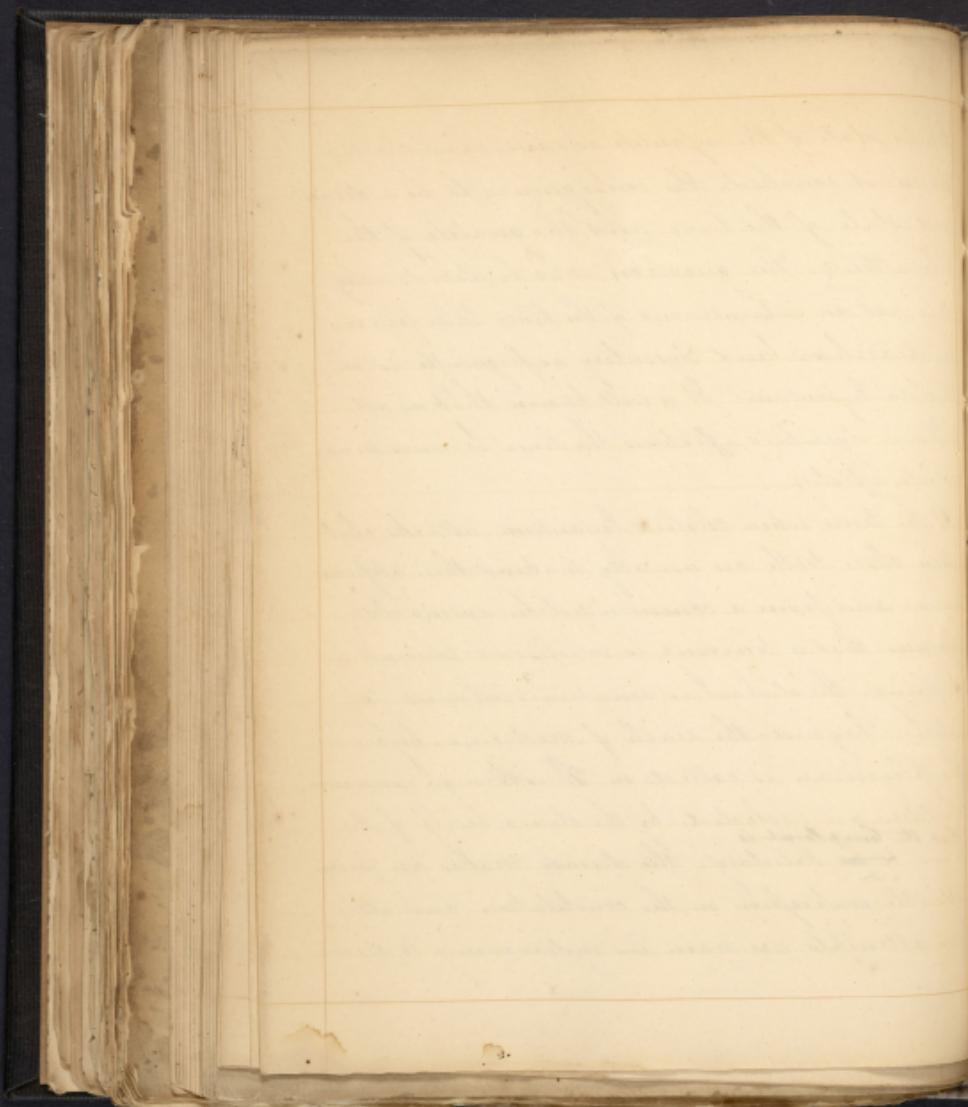
traced throughout the whole of the alimentary canal, and especially on the mucous membrane, in which are discovered darkish spots, and, most particularly, in the duodenum: sometimes the peritoneum is affected; but not frequently: the large intestines are seldom affected, except when the disease takes on the dysenteric type. The hepatic apparatus is very much deranged, the liver is found increased in size, and sometimes indurated; but most generally soft and flabby, and the ducts and gall bladder distended with bile, which is much altered from its natural or healthy state. The spleen, and pancreas are seldom affected.

We might naturally trace the affection of the liver in cholera of children from the circumstance of the blood vessels of that organ having their origin in all the abdominal viscera. And that whenever there is an irritation of the intestines, consequently there must be an increased flow of blood to the liver; and this irritation kept unceasantly in action, and the



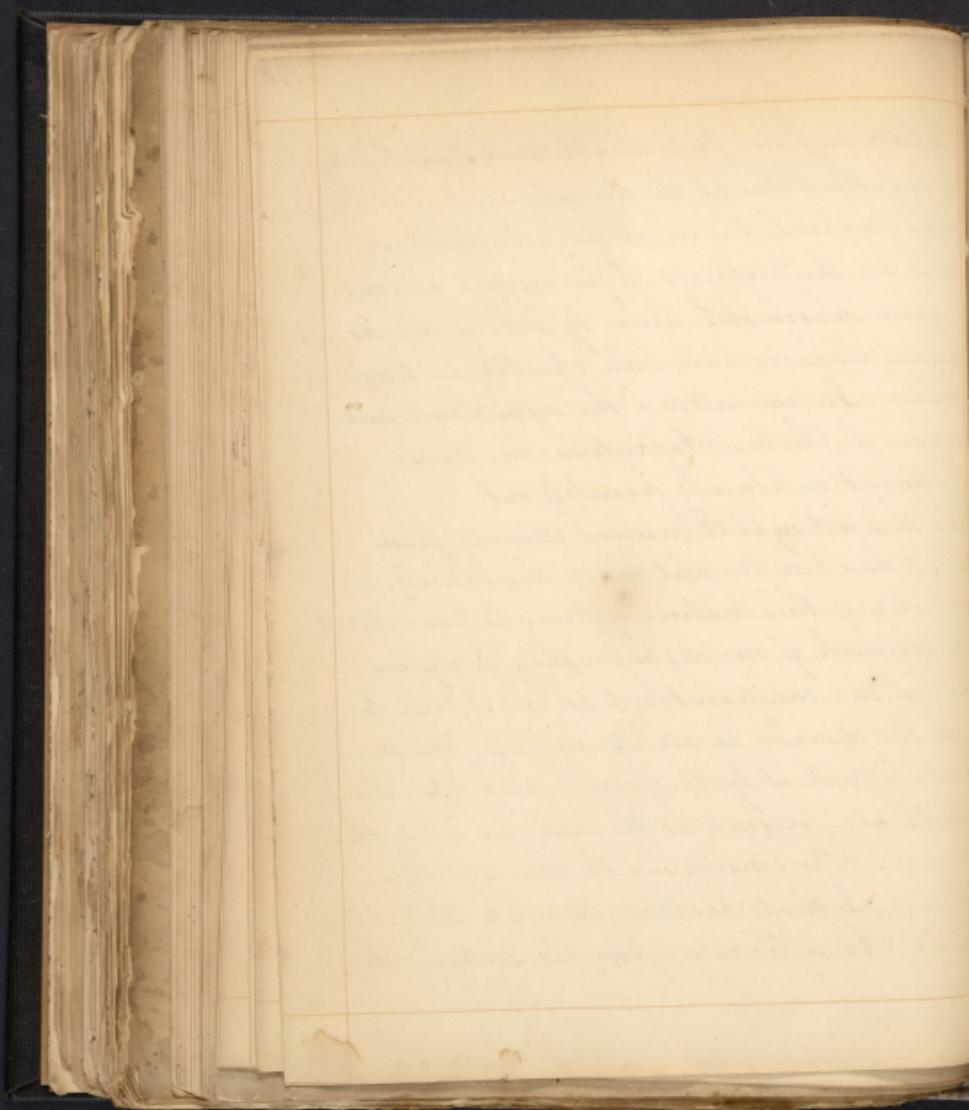
tender state of the infantile organs, considered, we must conclude the consequence to be a deranged state of the liver, and the quality of the bile altered. The question may be asked, why does not an enlargement of the liver take place in diarrhoea, and dysentery as frequently as in Cholera Infantum? It is well known that in all chronic dysenteric affections the liver becomes more or less affected.

At the time when cholera Infantum, attacks children their teeth are usually making their appearance, and from a common notion, among old women, that a purging is wholesome during teething, the disease is sometimes allowed to extend beyond the reach of medicine, before the physician is called in. Thus through ignorance children are neglected, by the strong belief of the ~~that the Complaint is~~ nurse to ~~be~~ voluntary. The disease makes an irreconcilable impression on the constitution, and all our attempts are vain in endeavouring to rescue

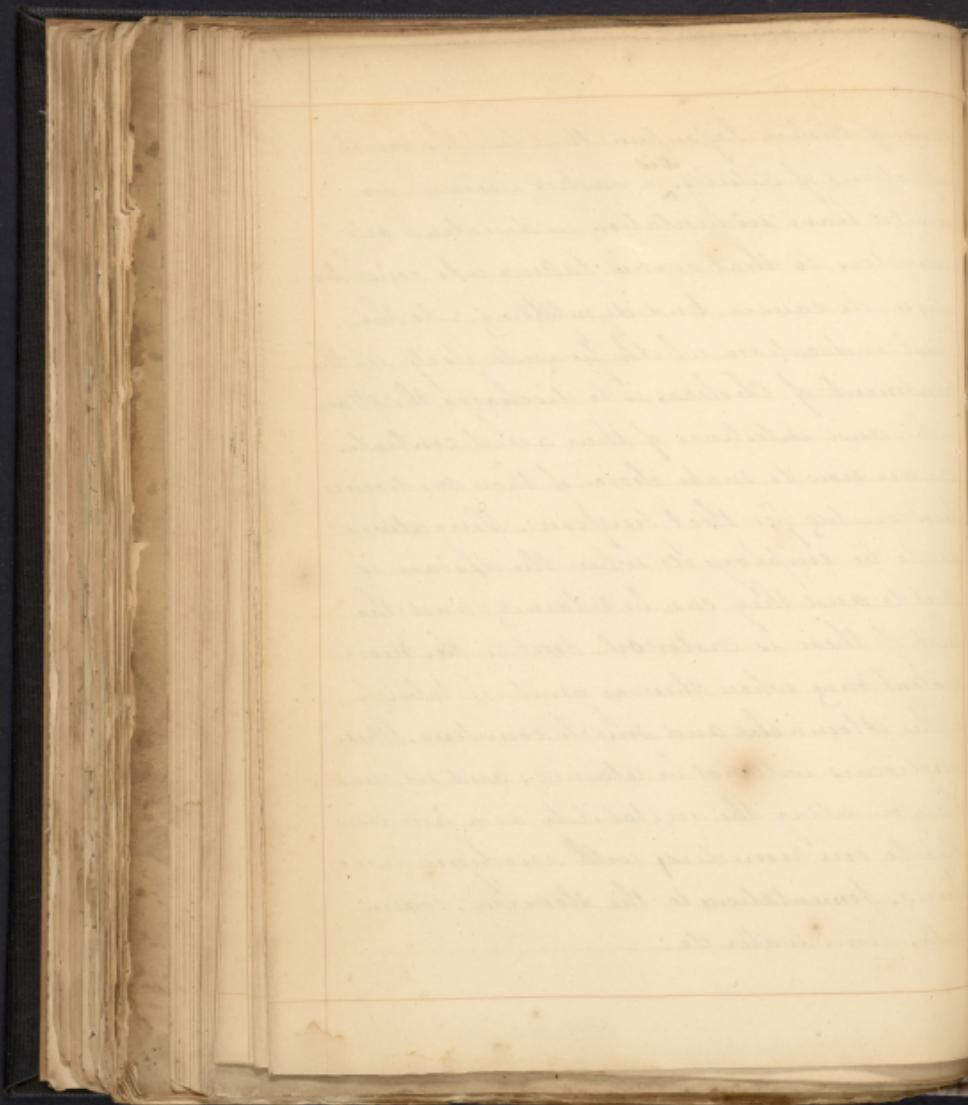


the little suffers from death. But I am happy to say, that this at the present period, but seldom happens. People are more enlightened, and see the propriety of procuring aid at a more seasonable time, by which means many diseases have been checked in their career. In consulting the symptoms, and causes of Cholera Infantum, our course of treatment is plainly pointed out.

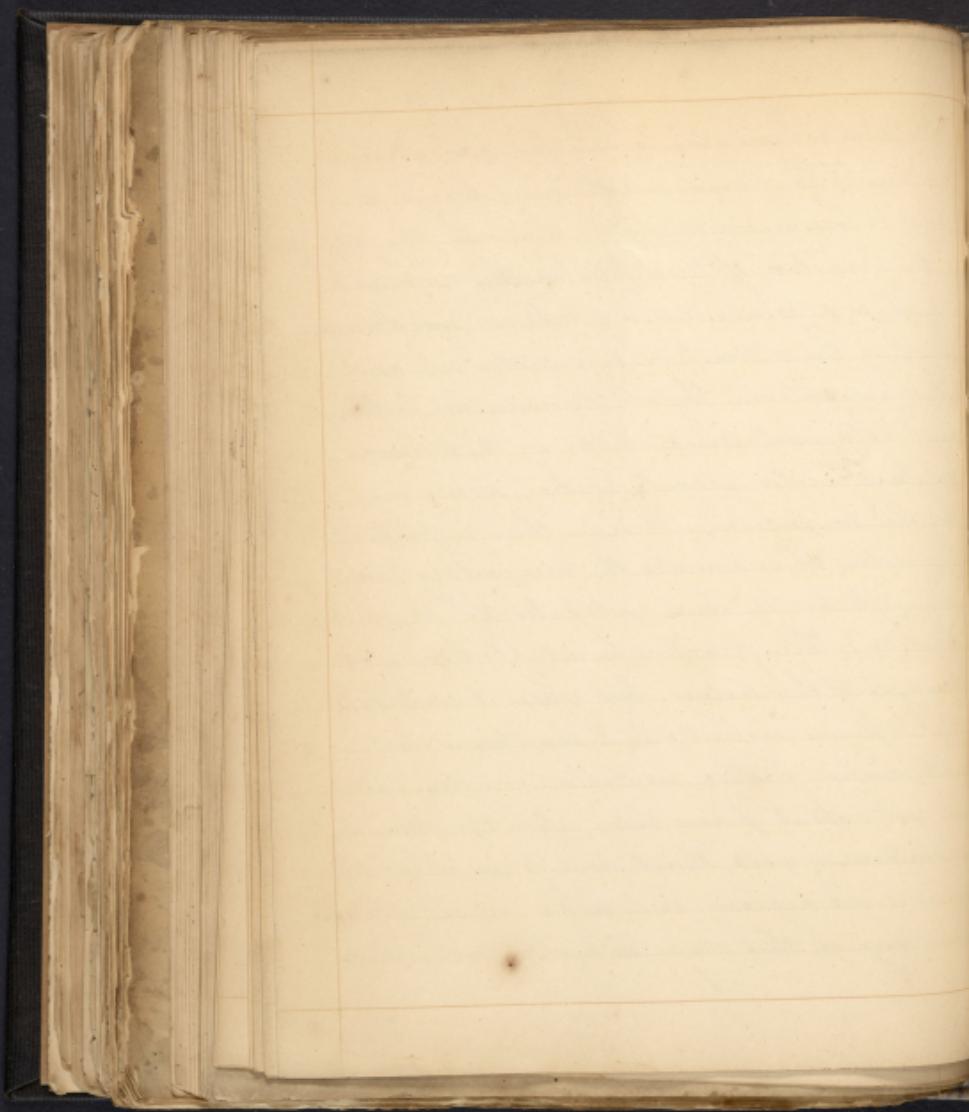
In this attempt I cannot deviate from what has been taught me in this school; as nothing of this nature appears to have eluded the research of our distinguished professors; but no one can point out an exact rule to beat the disease in all its various forms; we are to attack it by the forms, and symptoms, which are present, at the time we meet the disease. After considering the causes of this disease, I shall proceed to relate the treatment. In reflecting upon the history of the



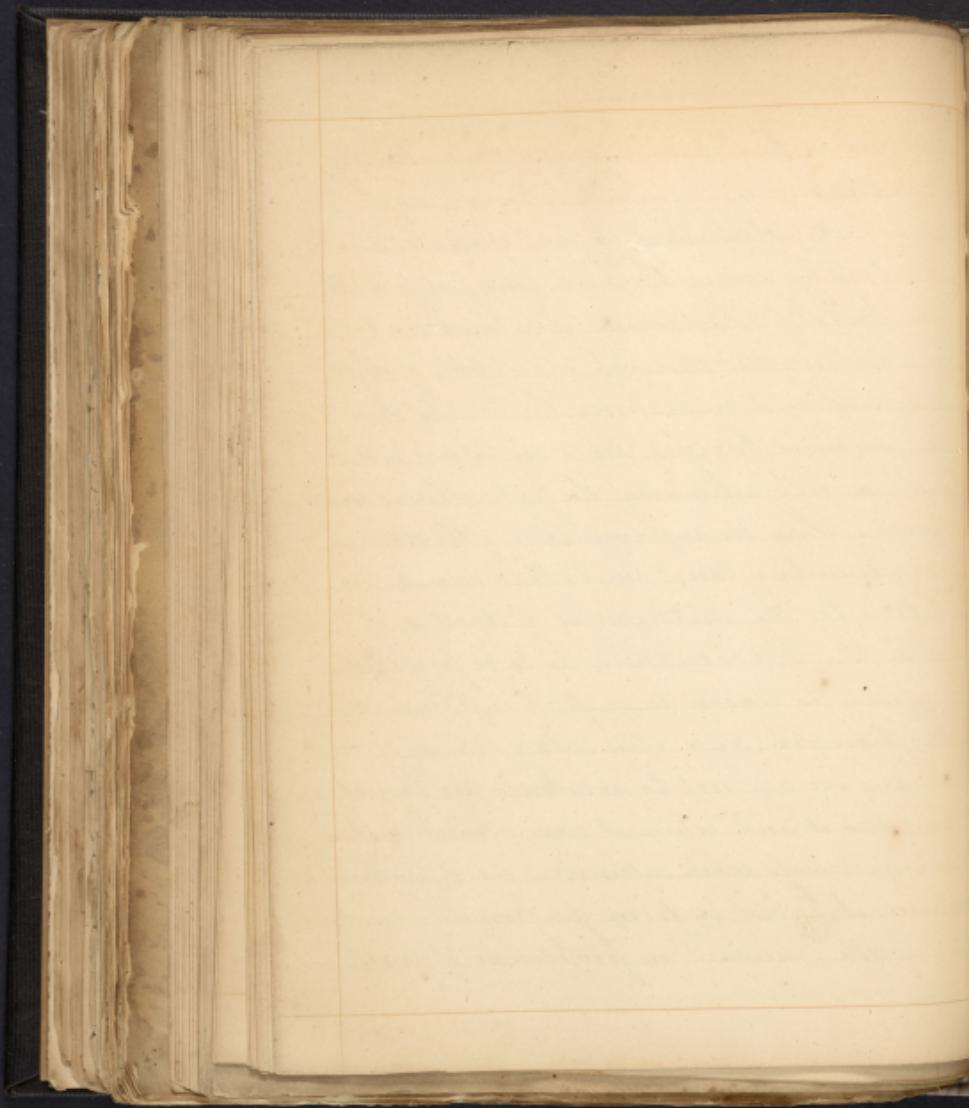
cause of Cholera Infarctum, that like the bowel affections of ^{it is} adult, a ^{it is} gastric disease, we would have no hesitation in directing our remedies to that organ, taking into consideration, its causes, and symptoms. As the first indication which presents itself in the treatment of Cholera, is to discharge the stomach, and intestines of their acid contents. we are now to make choice of those medicines best suited for that purpose. Purgatives are to be employed when the disease is mild and they can be retained; and the best of these is Castor Oil. But in the more violent ones where there is great irritability of the Stomach, and much vomiting. These medicines will not be retained; and we must therefore allay the irritability as a previous step to our remedies, with anodyne incisions, fomentations to the Stomach, warm bath, lime water &c.



After this we are able to employ purgatives: the one I have used with the most success, is that recommended by Dr Chapman, the prof. of the practice of Medicine in this university, which is a combination of calomel and opium. This has the advantage over castor oil and other purgatives, by its diminutive bulk, and retained much better by the stomach, by its specific gravity even if vomiting should be excited. Besides these important properties, it evacuates the alimentary canal more effectually, and mitigates the spasmotic affection. This practice is adapted to ordinary diseases of this nature, but when it makes its attack more violent, as it sometimes does, with violent gastric irritation, vomiting, and will not admit of any thing upon the stomach, accompanying with thirst and pain about the umbilical region and high fever:—although vomiting in this stage is highly prohibited.

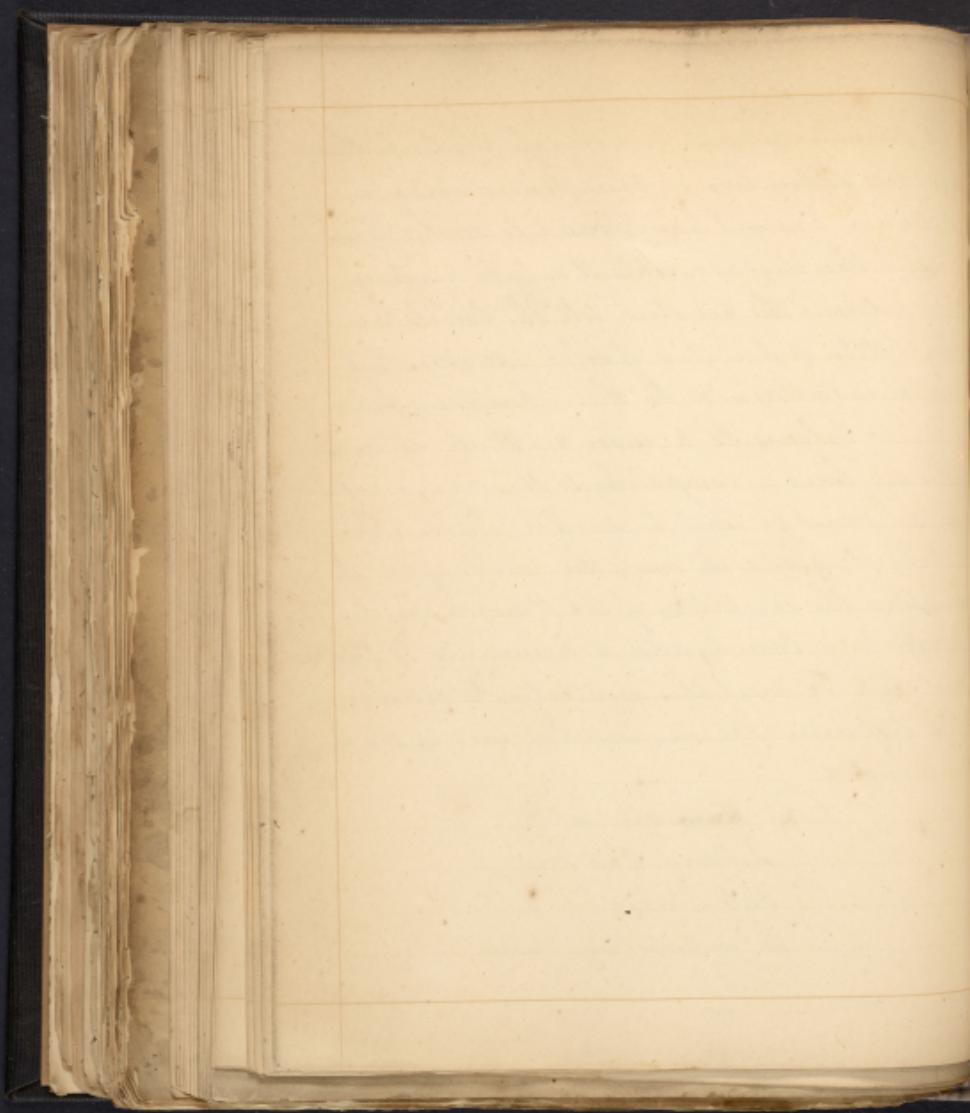


by writers on this disease, yet by the authority of Dr Chapman, I used the Ipecac. and cleansed the stomach of its foul contents, and afterwards by giving the testaceous Julep with a few drops of Sduatum. it calmed irritation and rendered the stomach susceptible of other Medicines, and by keeping the bowels open with calomel purges, and continuing the Julep. or oily emulsion, the patient was soon relieved. When no inflammation of the Stomach and alimentary Canal exist, there can be no objection to the employment of emetics, of which the Ipecacuanha is to be preferred. When there is reason to suspect inflammation of the Stomach and alimentary Canal in this disease, we are not to overlook the lancet. I have seen it used where it gave almost instantaneous relief. when calomel is used without opium. it is best in form of a powder combined with Rhubarb in proportion of from



to 1 grain of Calomel to 3 or 4 of Rhubarb, these powders taken two or three times a day in ordinary cases I have found to succeed in curing the disease. It will only be necessary to continue the powders till the bowels are completely evacuated of bilious matter, this can be ascertained by their changing from a dark bilious to a more natural colour. After we have accomplished this end, a recourse must be had to such a combination of remedies, as will have the double effect of quieting the irritation of the Stomach, and alimentary canal, and determining to the surface. To meet this indication a combination of opium. Siccac. and Calomel is recommended.

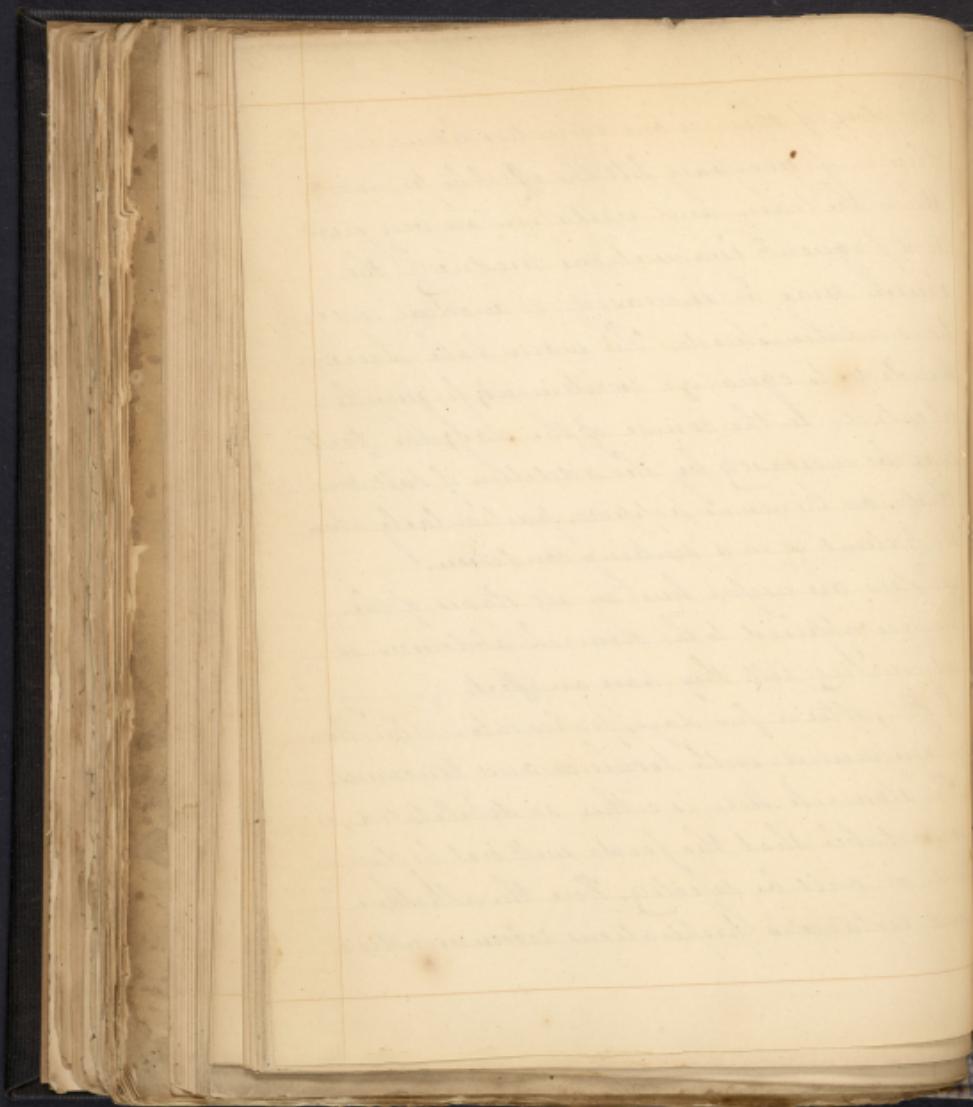
R: Gram opii gr: 1
Sub min. Hyd: 20: 1
Pul: Siccac. 10: 1
M: et pul: vix siccata.



The dose of these is one every two hours, or oftener if necessary till the effect be produced. When the pain, and irritation are very great and frequent evacuations produced, the opium may be increased, or auditive injections administered. The warm bath is recommended to equalize excitement, frequently repeated in the course of the day; the effects may be increased by the addition of salt, mustard, or Cayenne pepper, particularly when the patient is in a sinking condition.

Blistera are useful here in all stages of the disease applied to the stomach, abdomen, or extremities till they have an effect.

It often, after a few days, passes into a diarrhoea accompanied with torments and tenesmus. The stomach here is either so debilitated, or so irritable that the food will not be digested, or will be rejected. Here the alicantine and Cretaceous preparations recommended



by Dr Chapman are useful.

R: Cet. fpt. 3*ij*

Tinct. opii gtt **XV**

Sacchar. alb. 3*j*

ag: menth: 3*ij*

A dessert spoon full to be taken as the occasion may require, or every hour.

Rhubarb combined with Magnesia.

Laudanum &c. is recommended, especially when torments and tenesmus exist.

The following is an excellent prescription given us by Dr. Chapman to relieve torments and tenesmus.

R: ol. Ricini 3*j*

Sacchar. alb 3*j*

Rub them well together, then add by degrees
ag: calc: 3*iv*. et Tinct. opii gtt **XV**.

The dose is graduated according to circumstances. Anodine injections are generally

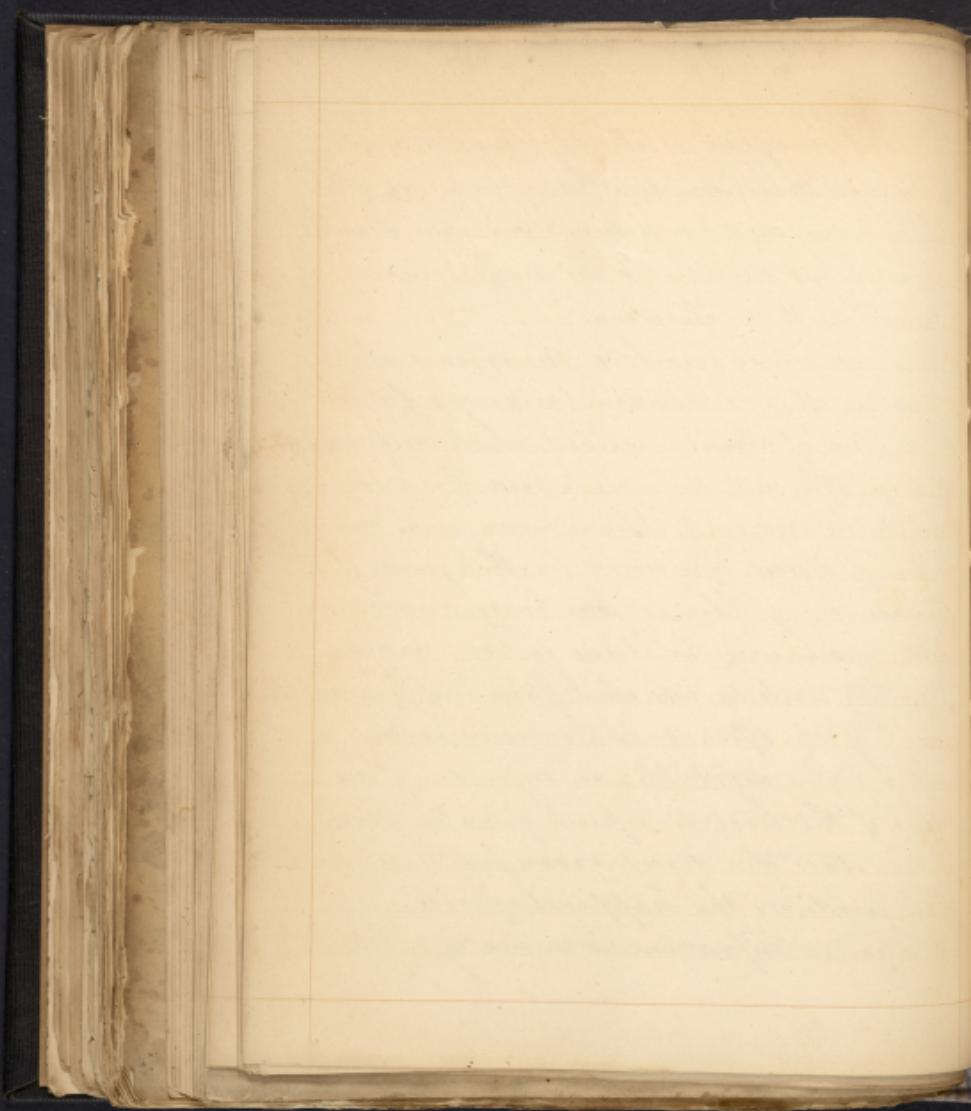
From the good effects of Sols of Tumptine in
a case of dysentery, I was induced to make
trial of it in Cholera Infantum. In one case
where the discharge was very offensive Calomel
purges previously given & febrile action presumably
abolished. I gave the Sols of Tumpt. in the form of
an emulsion. & had reason to be pleased with its effects.

the most successful in relieving torments and tenesmus. Diarrhoea sometimes continues after all the pain, and acute symptoms have disappeared: but nevertheless the discharges are frequent and debilitating.

Here we must resort to medicines which are calculated to restrain purging: of these the virtue of alum deserves much commendation; after all the acid and offensive matter be removed, I have began with one grain of alum, combined with a grain of opium, every three or four hours, and gradually increasing the alum to 2 or 3 grains.

Another remedy which I have had frequent proofs of its efficacy, is the Dewberry, an indigenous vegetable; an infusion of one ounce of the root, to a pint of water given in the dose of a dessert spoon full every hour often produces the happiest effect.

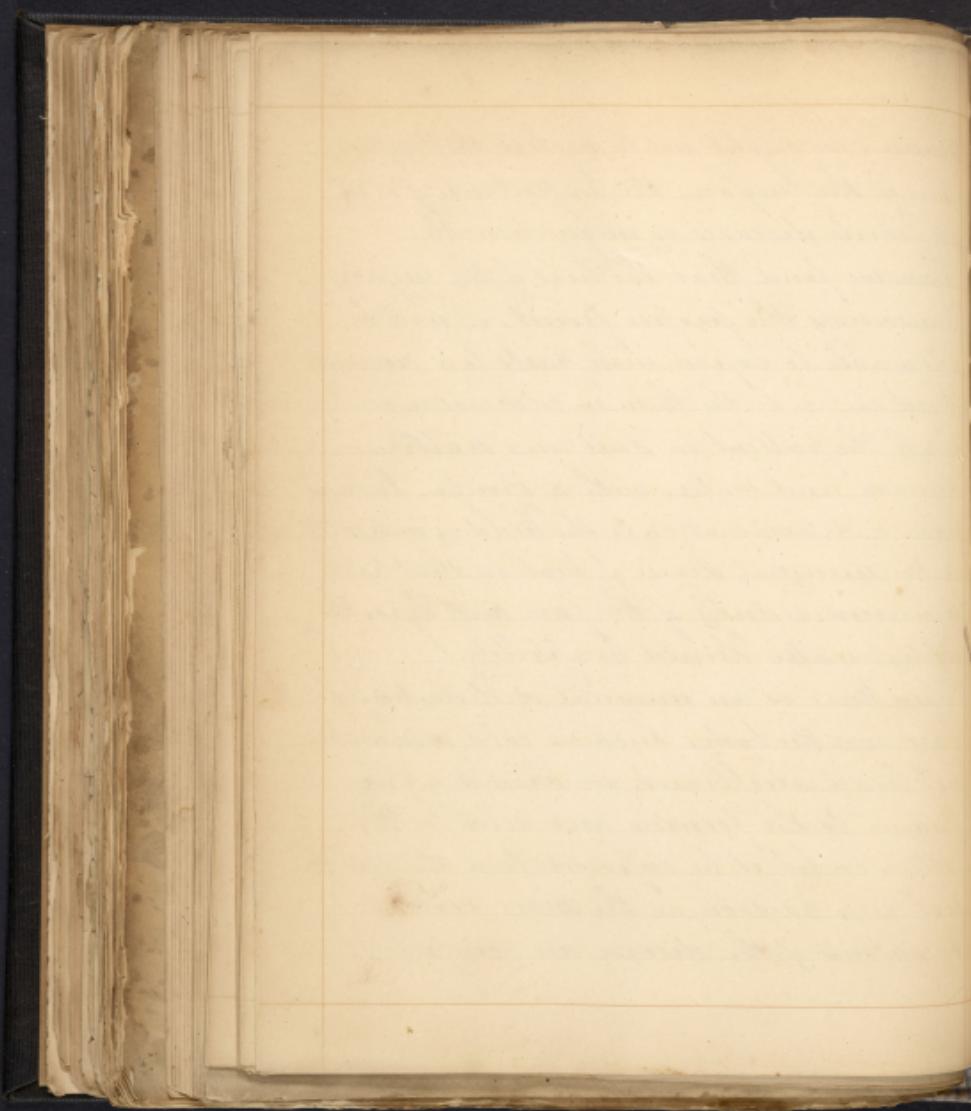
As Cholera Infantum is evidently a febrile



disease, we ought not to neglect the temperature of the surface; the importance of it in all febrile diseases is unquestionable.

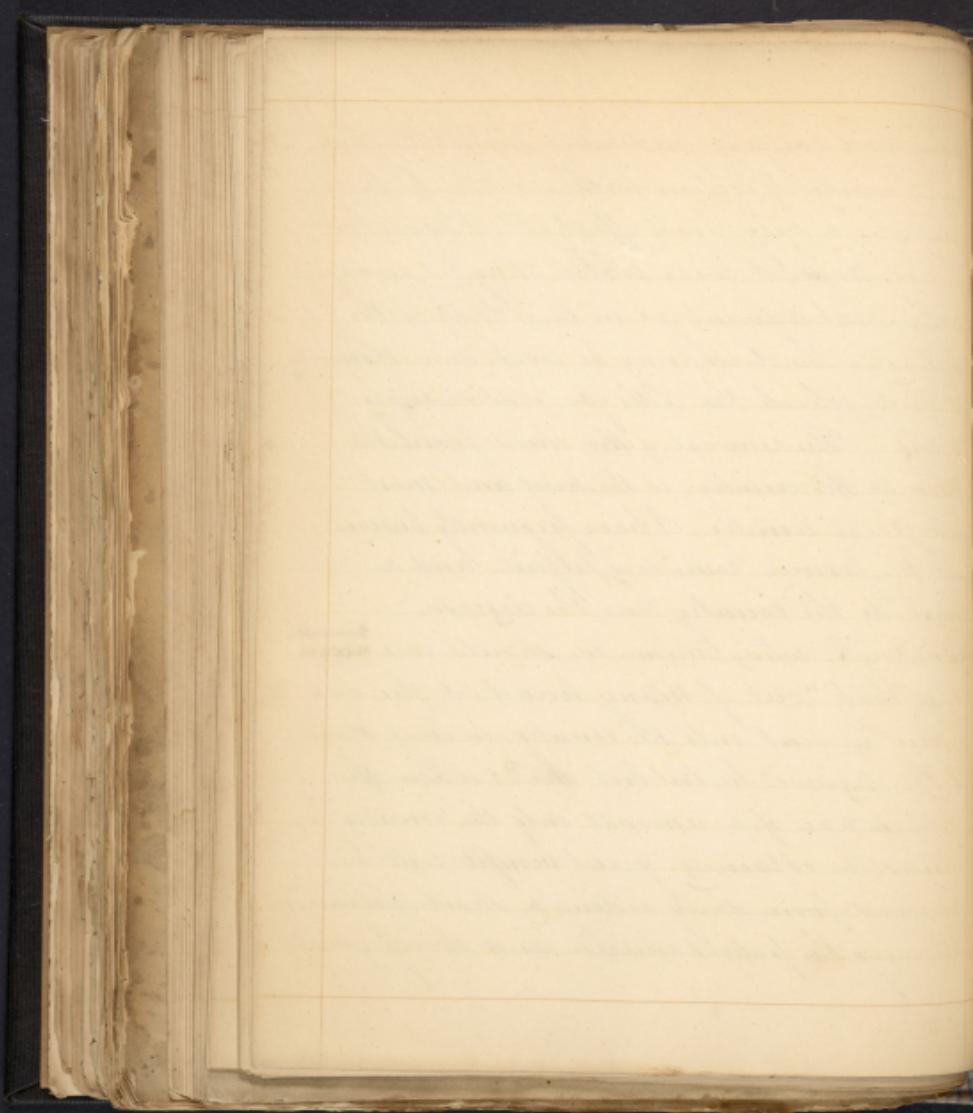
When we find that the heat of the surface transcends the proper point, it will be advisable to expose such parts to a current of cool air, or bathe them in cold water, or wash the patient in salt and water, or vinegar and water, with a sponge. In cases where a determination to the head is indicated by the unequal degree of heat in that part, delirium, redness of the face and eyes, the coldest water should be applied.

When there is an unequal distribution of heat over the body, such as cold extremities hot head and breast, we should apply flannel to the former, and cold to the latter, or let it be exposed to a stream of cool air, as soon as the more violent symptoms of the disease are composed.

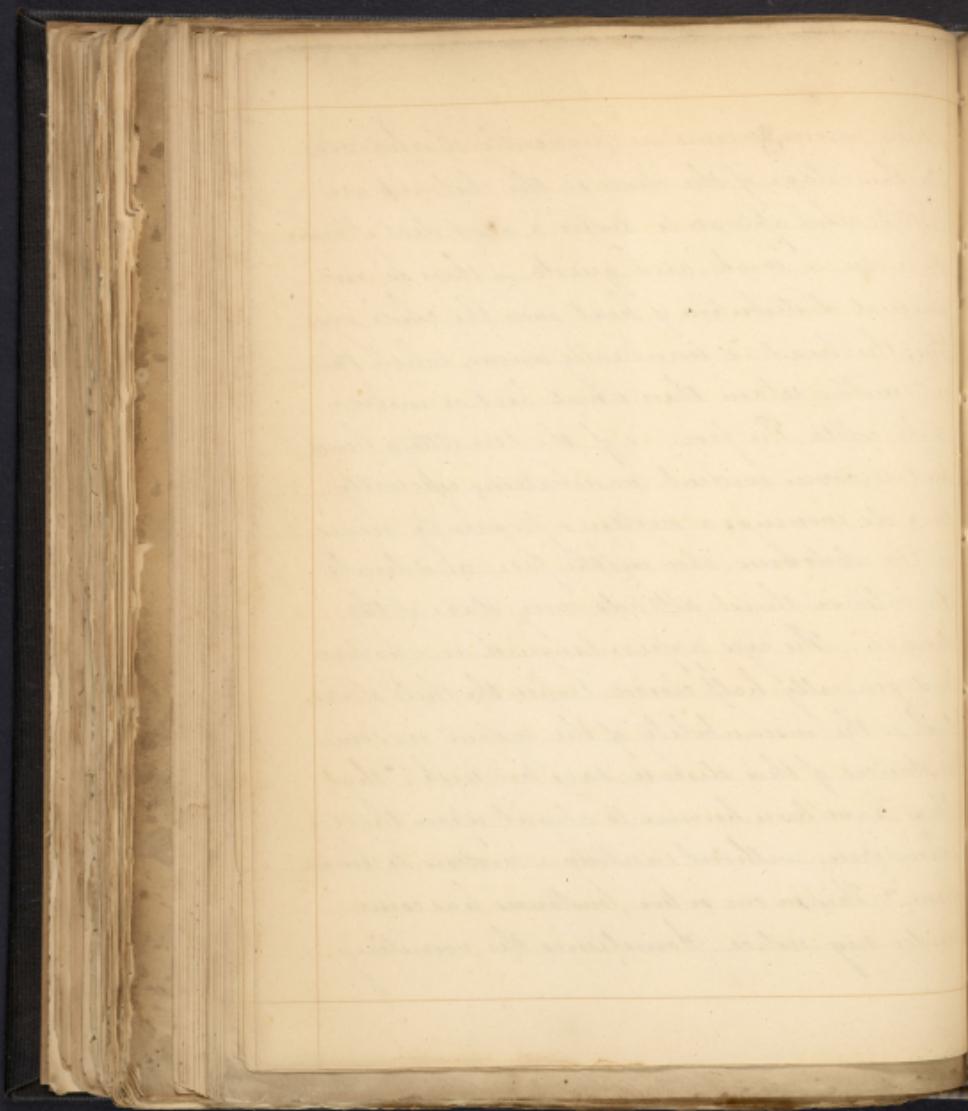


tonic and cordial medicines should be given. The bark in decoction with a little nutmeg produces a very good effect. Port wine, or Claret mixed with water, may be given with great advantage in this stage of the disease; the diet may be now more stimulating, which the little patient strongly craves. — The removal of the child from the town to the country, is the next and most beneficial remedy. I have frequently known all the former remedies to fail, and a visit to the country cure the disease.

Dr Rush, whose name we should ever ^{remember} ~~forget~~ says that "out of many hundred children whom he sent into the country, in every stage of the disease he lost but ~~one~~ when the advantage of a removal into the country cannot be obtained, great benefit will be received from daily riding a short distance, allowing the patient exercise, and the enjoyment



of pure air. I shall conclude by giving what
is recommended as a preventative of this
disease. 1st. The Child should not be
weaned under a year old. 2nd. The daily
use of the cold bath. 3rd. The due attention
to clothing; flannel should be worn
next the skin, and worsted stockings
upon the feet. 4th. Diet should be carefully
attended to, avoiding unripe fruits or the
excess of any fruit. The proper diet is milk
and the farinaceous articles. — a moderate
quantity of salted meat occasionally during
those months in which the disease prevails.
5th. The use of old wine, from a tea spoon full
to half a wine glass full given according
to the age of the child, every day. 6th.
Cleaning both with respect to the
person and clothing of Children. 7th. The
removal of Children into the country, before
the approach of warm weather. During



dentition the gums should be frequently examined, and should inflammation or much irritation occur, they must be freely lanced. —

